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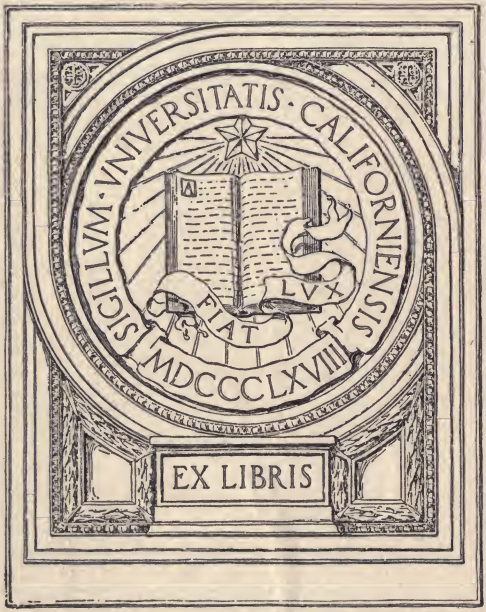
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WINE AND GALL

BY L. & R.

WINE AND GALL

BY L. AND R.

OXFORD B. H. BLACKWELL, BROAD STREET, MCMXVIII.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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RESOLVE.

I LEAVE to others' purses
My silver coin of tears
You know not what to do with,
And when my book appears
You will not read the verses.

But my gold coin of laughter
You will not so despise:
It shall be yours to play with,
Shall multiply in your eyes
And buy your love hereafter.

L.

THIS was the tune I once sang
When my muse was erotic:
Hair, and lips, and eyes,—
(Bitter sighs!)
Lips, and eyes, and hair,—
(Oh despair!)
Thus the fire into life sprang
When my dreams were exotic,
And my heart was despotic.

This is the tune I now sing
That I am convalescent:
Hair, and lips, and eyes—
(Oh surprise!)
Lips, and eyes, and hair—
(Hope and dare!)
So the flames into life spring
Now the spirit is crescent,
And the heart acquiescent.

L.

ITER PERSICUM.

WHEN I rode out of Ispahan
A thousand years ago,
My horse's hoofs were shod with gold,
My turban rolled with gems untold,
And the people louted low.

My poet rode along with me
And sang of old Iran,
Of Rustem and of Rudabeh,
And whiled away the summer day
As only poets can.

But now I march the Persian Road
With the devil of a pack;
The jackals howl as we go by,
And the fellows sigh and curse and cry,
And my clothes are like a sack.

And the palaces of Ispahan
Are full of owls and bats;
And the truest poet I ever knew,
Whose roses grew in the Syrian dew,
Lies dead at Davos Platz.

R.

FANTASIA.

A PEACOCK is my lady's fan
That opening cries
With all its eyes:
"Come to me, come to me, you who can!"

A dragon-fly within her hair
With flickering wings
Dances and sings:
"Dream of me, dream of me, you who dare!"

And on her feet is a Persian fay
That seems to purr
From all its fur:
"Marry me, marry me, you who may!"

L.

LOVE, you are like a row of limes
With murmur of many bees;
From golden bells their honeyed chimes
Are borne upon the breeze.

But in your still, autumnal times
You are like the olive-trees
On some cool peak the chamois climbs
With enviable ease.

L.

WHEN with her tresses free
Chloe caresses me,
Though you may think it strange
The thing distresses me.

My eyes are filled with her,
My lips are stilled with her,
And yet alas! the change,—
My heart is chilled with her.

R.

THE POPPY.

OH dancing in the sun
While dreaming of the moon!
Sleep folded in the fun
Of a fairy's red balloon;

I would I were as wise
As thou within thy field—
First, pleasure to her eyes,
Then, opium to yield.

L.

WHEN I forget my promised part,
Growing intense or deep,
Confusing fun with tragic art—
Shut eyes and go to sleep.

Or when I stumble o'er the jest,
Mistaking memory so
That my head falls upon your breast—
Sleep on, you need not know.

Or should the mad heart strive and break
From shallow self-dug grave,
Turn, sighing in a dream, nor wake,—
It is the winds that rave.

When I am tempted to despair
And burning cling and weep,
Just smile as when they wash your hair,
Shut eyes, and go to sleep.

L.

THE curious hidden things
That every poet sings
And all men know:
Tragical runes on rings
Misty prefigurings
Of friend and foe;

Dark love that spurs and stings
And maddens men and flings
To endless woe,
Poison a wizard brings
To secret stairs of kings,
Deadly and slow;

The rhythmic beat of wings,
The sultriness that clings
Where yew-trees grow;
These are the hidden things
That every poet sings
And all men know.

R.

STRANGE, for how long I hid it,
This fountain of light song
Where froth and bubbles throng—
A wonder how I did it!

When did I first feel flutter
The bright and wanton birds,
The floating feather-words
That easily now I utter?

It was thy will that taught me,
Thy will to see Love slain
Sooner than bear a pain
My passion might have brought thee.

L.

AEGROTAT.

IT hurts my eyes to look in yours,
And like a splintered shell
Their dark beam in the brain endures,—
Ah how can I be well?

Your little hand hurts like a knife,
The sort they will not sell
To one who looks askance at life—
Ah how can I be well?

It wounds my lips to wander in
Your throat's enchanted dell,
Driven back by the determined djinn—
Ah how can I be well?

Heart is heavy and soul is sick,
There is no more to tell
But kiss me better and love me quick
And I may yet be well.

L.

GAUDIUM IN COELO.

I DREAMED that I was dead, and after
My soul had passed its mortal bars
I caught an echo of rolling laughter
Across the intervening stars.

And all my fear was changed to wonder,
I knew the rapture of the blest—
To hear the immortal sons of thunder
Applaud each day the immortal jest.

R.

AS carven symbols of the hours
A marble chalice deck,
There is a garland of red flowers
Insculptured round her neck.

But none can see the crimson bloom
Wrought in such cunning wise
Under her hair's descending gloom
Hid from all careless eyes,

The coloured roses moulded there
In marvellous relief,
The wreath of kisses which I dare
To offer in my grief;

Because no better than the Dead
Can she requite my love,
Her heart is buried she has said,
My garland hangs above.

L.

THE world rolls heavily onward
And men grow old and die,
And girls who danced a year ago
Do nothing now but sigh,
And you, Dear, ask me why.

The world is only a nursery,
And Time is a restless boy;
He loves his playthings while they're new,
And every single toy
Once filled his heart with joy.

But after a while he wearies,
The best of wine goes flat;
Drinkers grow into drunkards,
The kitten becomes a cat,
And the reason, Dear, is that!

R.

SPIRIT.

TO show you that I love you better
Than the dead loves of youth
I'll not reveal to you the letter
Of Love's most bitter truth.

You must not see the melancholy
Emaciate limbs of Woe;
With the Spirit of perfect folly
I will amuse you so.

Are you not rather tired already
With the world's frets and jars?
Oh let me keep you smiling, Lady,
And lift you to the stars!

L.

FATHER AND SON.

MY father's god is a prohibitionist
Who threatens and bullies and smites;
All that he saves from red perdition is
The hero of a hundred fights.

I look to one whose law is lenient,
With more of ought than must,
Who brings the hearts of the disobedient
To the wisdom of the just.

R.

OF THE LILY THAT WENT TO HEAVEN.

I PLANTED seven lilies
In the month of May;
One was trodden underfoot,
One stolen away,

One loved the moon, and died
In the heat of the sun;
One shrank back into the ground
Ere well begun.

One I plucked for comfort,
One tarrieth;
But the seventh found her heart
Not seeing Death.

L.

AND if you ask me why
I kiss your finger-tips
'Tis, not to meet your placid eye,
Your cold, impassive lips.

And if you ask me how
I dare to kiss your heart
I say 'tis from your cruel brow
Luckily set apart.

Your fingers well dissemble,
To hide indifference;
Your heart will readily throb and tremble
Weaving a love-pretence.

Your fingers cannot sneer,
Or speaking, prove unkind;
And the scorn that fills your heart, my dear,
I shall not ever find.

L.

GUENEVERE, Arthur and Launcelot
Dined in the hall at Camelot.

Arthur talked of taxes and debts:
Guenevere thought: "How fat he gets."

Launcelot gave the king his ear,
But fastened his eyes on Guenevere.

And whenever he murmured "Indeed," or "Yes,"
The queen admired his cleverness.

R.

I WANT to kiss you once and die,
Your beauty on my heart of lead
As on a coin the conqueror's head;
Stamped with your image, lay me by.

I want to die beneath your kiss:
Men strive for threescore years and wear
Themselves to shadows of despair
For less than this—*far* less than this.

L.

IF there is any power above
The casual cruelty of fate,
You love me with a loathly love,
I hate you with a holy hate.

Your love is like the fell desire
The tyrant Holofernes knew;
My hate is tempered in the fire
That forged the blade of her that slew.

Haply you will rejoice one day
To win me to your silken bed
But dawn shall see me bear away
The crimson trophy of your head.

R.

BELIEVE it, Love? no never!
You heart still loudly beats;
One day of Love defeats
Your age-long stern endeavour.

You are a watch wants winding,
A hinge that lacks the oil,
A knife in need of grinding,—
You shall not rust or spoil.

You live, and are a woman,
Your blood the colour of mine,
Within your veins' wild vine
Marks you for all time human.

L.

ALF LEILA.

NEXT June it will be three whole years
Since last I saw your face,
A thousand nights of laughter and tears
Of noble things and base.

Water of Lethe, wash me clean
Of rapture and regret,
Take every trace of what has been
Since the last night we met.

R.

I MEAN to conquer you, my Love,
And not my love for you,
To lure the most elusive dove
Or tirelessly pursue.

My love for you is tameless, wild,
And will not be controlled,
But you, my Love, are meek and mild
When snared within my hold.

On Faith's highroad to Fate—a way
No waverer ever tried,
On the sure steed of Dawn towards Day
Unwearying I ride.

O'er the hill-paths of Poesy
By passes old and new,
On wings of storm, by land or sea,—
I mean to conquer You.

L.

'TIS said of poets that they lie
For love,
And suffer less the more they sigh
For love,
But I
Am no true poet,—that is why
I tell the truth, and, laughing, die
For love.

L.

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